

Orders conceiued by the Lords of her Maiesties priuie

Councell, and by her Highnesse speciall direction, commanded to be put in execution for the restraint of killing and eating of flesh this next Lent, and to be executed aswel by the Lord Maior within the City and Suburbs of London, and by the Officers of the liberties and exempt places in and about the same, as by the Lords Lieutenants in the seuerall Counties of the Realme. Anno 1590.

In the xxxij. yeere of the Queenes Maiesties reigne.



First her Maiesties pleasure is, vpon her vnderstanding of the great disorders heretofore and especially the last Lent committed in killing and eating flesh in the time of Lent, especially in the Citie of London, & the liberties thereto adioyning, that the statute made in the fift yeere of her Maiesties reigne for the restraint therof, be put in due execution by the way of inquisition, and charge of Iuries, and by any other good meanes, both within the Citie and all other places requisite.

And for the better information of the trueth of this disorder, and redresse of the inconuenience, the said Iurie shall call before them, and send for any of the seruants of any Inholders, Victuallers, Cauerners, and keepers of ordinarie tables, and such other that vtter victuals, to examine them vpon their corporall othes, what flesh shall be, or is any day during the Lent season dressed, killed, vttered, or eaten in their houses: which if they shall refuse to doe, then they shall commit to prison the said seruants, for refusing vpon their othes to declare the trueth.

And because a great part of this disorder groweth by the Butchers of the Citie and also of the Countrey, that secretly kill and bring flesh to the Citie: her Maiesties pleasure likewise is, that there shall be only fixe Butchers licenced by the Lord Maior to kill flesh within the Citie and liberties thereof, without exacting any thing of them for their licences.

And euery of these Butchers to be so licenced, shall be first bound in the summe of two hundred pounds to her Maiesties vse, (and the bonds to be certified to the Queenes Remembrancer in the Exchequer) to sell no flesh in the time of Lent, but to such persons as shall shew them speciall warrant from the Lord Maior, vnder his hand, & that the Butchers do truely keepe particular books of their dayly sales, & of the names of those to whom they shall so sell, with the quantities & the times thereof.

That the Lord Maior giue order to these Butchers, not to sell any flesh but at reasonable prices, and for that purpose the prices shall be set downe by the said L. Maior, such as may be reasonable both for the buyer and seller: and if the Butcher shall breake that order, then to be forthwith discharged, and committed to prison, and an other put into his place, and his bond to be certified into the Exchequer to the Queenes benefite.

That the Lord Maior himselfe shall graunt no warrant for buying of flesh in Lent, but to such as shall haue and shew to him licence in good writing according to the lawes of the Realme to eat flesh, and the said licence to be viewed and registred, first by some two meete persons to be appoynted for this purpose by the Lorde Maior, and Bookes to be kept thereof, to be shewed further when the same shall be required, vniuerselle it be to Ambassadors and Agents of forreine Princes, to whom notwithstanding no further quantitie shall be allowed, then ratably for their owne household, and that such Ambassadors and Agents shall giue to the Lord Maior a certificate weekly, what they shall require to be for their owne tables.

That the L. Maior shall now presently before Lent cause all Inholders, Tablekeepers, Victuallers, Alehousekeepers, and Cauerners within the Citie, and liberties thereof, to appeare before him, or such persons as he shall appoynt meete for that purpose: and shall take bonds of euery of them in good summes of money not vnder one hundred pound apiece to her Maiesties vse, not to selle any flesh in their houses this Lent time for any respect, except it be for some such person that lieth in their house, and that also hath licence through sicknesse, or other necessarie cause, to eat flesh. Bonds shall be taken also of the Poulters, not to vtter any Poultry ware, but to such as shall be likewise licenced to eat flesh, and that such as will not giue such bonds, that they be secluded from all vtterance of victuall during the Lent season.

And for the Butchers and others that come with victuals of flesh out of the countrey to the citie, the L. Maior shall cause certaine persons, whereof some to be named to the L. Maior by the Wardens of the fishmongers, to watch at the gates & other like places in the suburbs, where flesh may be brought in, to view & search, & to intercept the same. And in case the same shall be found to be brought to any person not warranted nor licenced to eat it as is aforesaid, then the same to be forfeited & sold at the discretion of the L. Maior, for the vse of the poore in the Hospitals & prisons in the city, & the bringers to be imprisoned. And otherwise the Carriers of the said victuals of flesh to be guided to the persons houses that haue licence, with regard therein not to be abused. And this watch to be continued daily during the whole time of Lent: & if any of these watchmen be found negligent & corrupt in his charge, then he to be committed to prison, there to continue during the whole Lent.

And to the end the said Orders may be duly executed, it is thought conuenient, that the L. Maior should send for the chiefe Heads of the Company of the fishmongers, & shall cause them to make choice of foure or more wise and discrete persons of the said company, & men of good wealth & habilitie, to whom they shall commit the charge to make enquire after such as shall be found transgressors of the said Orders: who in respect of their trauell bestowed in that behalfe, shall haue the moitie of such bonds as shall be forfeited by transgressing of the said Orders, & the other moitie to be conuerted vnto godly vses, by the discretion of the M. Maiesties high Almoner, specially vpon poore & lame souldiers, with the priuie of some of the priuie counsel.

And that there may be due execution of the said Orders, as wel without, as within the Liberties of the city, it is thought conuenient, that they that haue the chiefe charge ouer the places priuiledged and exempt, where any Leetes or Law dayes are kept, shall authorize vnder their hand and seale foure persons as are aboue mentioned, to make search within the said priuiledged & exempt places for such as shall transgresse the said Orders, and shall for their trauel therein employed, receiue the moitie of the Bonds forfeited, as is aboue mentioned. And for the auoyding of corruption & partialitie in the said persons, it shall be necessarie to take their othes, and giue bond in some good and large summes, to see, as much as in them lyeth, a due obseruation of the said Orders.

And for that it is to be doubted, that the said fishmongers, vpon the obseruation of the sayde Orders, will take occasion thereby to enhaunce the prices, as well offresh as of Sea fish: It is thought meete, that the L. Maior shall take order with the said fishmongers, that as well the salt as fresh fish shall be vttered at reasonable prices.

Lastly, it is ordered, that no Butcher shall kill any Beeces, but such as shall be specially licenced therunto, without any fraud, for the furnishing of such ships as shall be lawfully employed by sea, either in the way of traffique, or otherwise. And that such Butchers, as shall be licenced either within or without the liberties to kill any flesh, shall euery foureteene dayes at the least, giue a true certificate vnto the L. Maior & head officers of the places exempt, of such numbers of Weales, Lambes, and Muttons, as shall be by them weekly killed: to the end, there may be a true certificate made euery fiftene dayes vnto the Lords and others of her Maiesties priuie Counsel, what numbers of the seuerall kinds aboue mentioned shall be killed, either within the Citie, or the places exempt.

And as these Orders are expressly deuised to be executed in the Citie of London, and places neere to the same, so her Maiesties pleasure and commandement is, that the execution of these or like Orders be performed by the commandement of her Maiesties Lieutenants to be sent to the Iustices of the peace, in all shires within their rule, & to all other officers in towne Corporate, or in any liberties, with like order for bonds to be taken to her Maiesties vse: the benefite of the forfeiture of which bonds, her Maiestie may at the intercession of the said Lieutenants cause to be distributed amongst lame & poore souldiers.

